**Reflection Essay**

From a research conducted by American Educational Research Association, 80% of teachers have been most effective when using a teaching plan. Planning for a lesson is always at the heart of one being an effective teacher. Not only does a teaching plan give the teacher a clear structure for essential learning but also, it boosts their confidence and gives the teacher more relaxation. Another importance of a teaching plan is that, it helps the teacher to maintain a standard teaching pattern. With a teaching plan, it is hard for a class to swerve from the topic. A teaching plan, impacts the management of the classroom, positively (Wong, 2009, p. 21).  I used a teaching plan during a learning session for nursing students. This paper seeks to reflect on my experience from the teaching plan, my clinical teaching education session and the impacts it makes on learning, by giving descriptions on what happened and expressing my feelings on what I was thinking. I will also evaluate what was good and bad, give an analysis of the situation and a conclusion that will include, what I would do differently and everything that I have learnt.

**Positive Impacts of a Teaching Plan**

I noted that several things went well during the learning session. They include the following:

**Student Involvement**

According to Wong, (2009), “A classroom that is well managed, shows that the teacher’s teaching plan is good. One of the characteristics of a well managed classroom is that, students get deeply engaged in their class work” (p. 81).  I gave the students a few questions to answer and I asked them to think and then pair up in order to share their ideas. The students were deeply involved in their work. They did whatever work I gave them excellently. This is because I had described their roles and tasks which I had provided in my teaching plan.

**No Confusion**

A good teaching plan does not bring any confusion in the classroom (Wong, 2009, p.81). There was no confusion during our session. The students knew what to expect in the lesson since there had been teaching plans used before.

**Time Management**

Wong’s (2009) research found out that, another characteristic of a well managed classroom with the teaching using a good teaching plan is that time is never wasted (p. 81). During our learning session, no much time was wasted since I had laid out a good teaching plan. The students were aware of what was expected of them and therefore we covered everything I had planned to cover within the 45 minutes of the lesson, as scheduled.

**Conducive Environment**

A good teaching plan does not only create a conducive and working environment in the classroom but also a relaxing and amazing environment (Wong, 2009, p. 81). The classroom’s climate was already work-oriented but also amazing and relaxed. Time was well managed. There was no rushing. Besides that, the participants were not bored. The class was lively out of the discussions and the examples and funny personal but educative stories I narrated to the students.

However, a few things went wrong. There are a few questions which were not extensively covered. I think this happened because I allocated too many questions to be answered within a short period of time. Therefore, we ended up not covering all questions comprehensively.

Also we did not cover everything in detail. I think it was because I had divided the students into so many groups. I had asked them to pair up for them to answer some questions. Therefore, the groups gave so many different answers. Hence, tackling and correcting each one of them was tough and a lot of time got consumed. Maybe if I had opted for bigger groups, we would have covered a lot since the students would have given answers based on a wider level of thinking.

On my teaching plan I had allocated some time on practical skills. I asked the participants to demonstrate clinical practice. This section turned out to be indefinite. I think it was so because of the learning techniques I used (Corno, 2008, p. 170). The participants ended up not fully understanding what exactly they were to do and how exactly they were to demonstrate clinical practice.

There were also a few difficult participants. I had a hard time dealing with them. I even had an argument with one of the participants. I think it came to that because I did not understand these participants well enough. I did not identify their different learning needs.  This is the reason why we ended up having a few misunderstandings. (Houston & Beech, 2002, p.32)

I had not set ground rules in my teaching plan. This made the students too comfortable and maybe that is why there were a few difficult participants.

I tried differentiating the lesson and tried to understand the different skills of the participants. This was useful since I was able to accommodate all students regardless of their different abilities. My previous experience helped me since I was able to know the importance of differentiating a lesson before making a teaching plan.  I did a mistake not differentiating the lesson before implementing it. One of the characteristics of a teaching plan is the differentiation of a lesson to accommodate all students and their diversity since they all have different skills and knowledge (Corno, 2008 p. 164). Therefore, when a teacher is preparing a teaching plan and implementing a lesson, they should take into consideration the abilities of students, preferences, their experiences and the interests that the students or learners have

I tried gauging and aligning the students’ standards with my objectives.  One of the things I had done wrong is not doing my research to have a clear understanding of the knowledge of students based on their performance and behavior, then align them with standards, while laying out my teaching plan, which is very important. Carpinelli et al. (2008) argues that, when a teacher is preparing a teaching plan based on standards, they are supposed to align the expectations of students’ work with the assessments of the classroom to the standards of the objectives they have set for the lesson. The objectives set and the standards must also be in alignment with the behavior of the students and the measure of their skills and knowledge. Therefore, the learning objectives and standards should define and measure the achievements of the students’ knowledge and skills. (Carpinelli et al., 2008, p.19)

The presentation was tough. However I was feeling more relaxed. A teaching plan helps the teacher become more relaxed and in return the climate in the classroom also becomes relaxed. (Wong, 2008, p. 81) Therefore, I did not have any anxieties or what most people say, ‘butterflies in the stomach.’

Like I mentioned before, I had a few difficult participants. This was part of the reason why I felt like the presentation was tough. I did not have a clear understanding of the participants. I even had an argument with one of the difficult participants and the feeling was not pleasant at all.

To try and understand the learners’ needs, I did some observations during the session and also tried to integrate some learning and instructional theories. I also addressed the difficult participants directly.  Houston and Beech (2002) have a belief that students have different abilities and skills. They also have different characteristics and therefore, a teacher must try their best to meet all the needs of every student which might create problems for them (p. 32). Other people did not contribute much to the situation. They tried giving their opinions but it was not helpful since it would have only made the situation even worse.

**Possible Changes**

If I were to repeat the whole process, I would divide the participants into bigger groups. Dividing students into bigger groups stimulates creative thinking. Students divided in larger groups have a bigger platform of generating ideas that are more diverse compared to students in smaller groups. As a result we’d get a big quantity of ideas which is desirable for getting solutions to problems.

I also would have included better learning techniques and methods to avoid any confusion or misunderstanding among the students and to make the lesson more effective. According to (Wong, 2008, p.81) for a teacher to be effective, they have to design their lessons with an aim of achieving students’ mastery which is portrayed in the lesson plan. Also as they plan, they are supposed to be the ones to decide how the students will learn and the best methods and techniques to use.

Also I would allocate lesser time on some sections and add more time on other sections. This would be necessary in order to ensure that all areas are not just done with, but they are covered, comprehensively within the time set. An effective teacher should ensure that time is managed properly and all areas to be covered as indicated on the teaching plan are covered meticulously. This is one of the characteristics of an effective teacher (Wong, 2009, p. 12)

Therefore, the teacher should make a decision on the form and content of their instructions such as how much content is supposed to be presented and how much discussion is supposed to be done. Teachers should also decide on the material that is supposed to be covered and for how much time, including the in-depth, to form their instructions (Borich, 2007, p. 38).

Difficult participants seem to breed in all classrooms. However, if I were to repeat the whole process, I would set some ground rules to avoid the possibility of any difficult participants. I would also have rewards for good behavior. This would motivate students to behave well.

If was to do this all over again, to avoid any arguments, I would try to keep my cool since there is no way I will ever win the argument. I would also try and be conscious of the level of passion of the participant arguing, by asking them to explain the reason behind their argument. To affirm their argument, I would also request them to support it and ask them to provide proof.

**Evaluation of the Session**

My session was evaluated well. I received both positive and negative feedback. This was the case because there were aspects of an effective teaching plan that I incorporated in my teaching plan and there were also some that I left out.

 The positive feedback I received was out of the great working environment that was present in the classroom. It was both a working environment and at the same time, a pleasant learning environment for students. The students also had a fun time in class. They did not get bored, which is what an effective teacher should promote in their teaching plan. I think I received this feedback since I made use of examples and fun stories but informative ones to prevent boredom because it is very easy for students to get bored. I also think that boredom was absent in the classroom since I tried to engage the students in group discussions and answering of questions. I also gave them a chance to present and perform different practices during the session. Hence, the participants did not have any chance to get bored because they were engaged.

Another positive feedback I received is that the students became motivated. In my opinion, I received this positive feedback because of including group discussions in the session and also allowing the learners to evaluate and give their feedback about the session.

Nevertheless, there was some negative feedback I received such as poor handling of the difficult participants.  I think I received this negative feedback because of the way I handled the difficult participants in the session. Like I mentioned before, I had an argument with one of them and it was not pleasant at all.

**Action on Negative Feedback**

I was satisfied with both the negative and positive feedback I received. The positive feedback was more than the negative feedback. However, I felt like should have received more positive feedback than I received. Maybe the time allocated for the evaluation was not enough.

I will have to take action on the negative feedback I received. I will take the negative feedback positively and use it to improve on my skills, in order to enhance effective teaching. As a result, I will promote the success of students since teachers play an important role in shaping the academic careers of their students.

 One of the negative feedbacks I received is that, not all questions were covered as thoroughly as they should have been covered. Therefore, I will look for better ways and techniques to incorporate, to make sure that all areas are covered and all questions are answered comprehensively and on time.

Another negative feedback I received was about the way I handled the difficult participants. In regards to this, I will use better ways to handle a difficult participant since the way a teacher handles students in general may either affect their relationship with the student either positively or negatively. As a result, the relationship can affect the performance of the student.

**Summary**

In addition to what I would have done differently especially when dealing with difficult participants is that I would have pretended not to hear them or instead, make use of humor as an invitation to other participants, to speak up and give their opinions. Additionally, in regards to setting rules, I would also have set a limit of the amount of time every learner was supposed to take after being given a chance to speak. I have learnt a number of things. One of them being that it is important for a teacher to avoid any arguments with a student and not to get defensive at any cost. A teacher should not express anger to their students but instead, they should remain calm at all costs, ignore any attacks directed to them then reframe the attack on them as an attack to the real issue. I have also learnt that the teacher should take time while laying out their teaching plan and in it; they should include the most effective learning techniques, based on the knowledge and skills of the learners. After all, the wise men said that, “A job well planned is half done.”

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